

VZCZCXRO7935
RR RUEHRG
DE RUEHSW #0587 0761600
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 171600Z MAR 06 ZDS ZUI RUEHSD #0293 0792108 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1846
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEU/EU INTEREST COLLECTIVE
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 2016
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0834
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0086
RUEHRG/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0124
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0084
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0023
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2480
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0068
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0307

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 000587

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA, ISN, EUR

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (RENUMBERED PARAS REORDERED TAGS)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/15/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KSCA](#) [KNNP](#) [ENRG](#) [PARM](#) [ETTC](#) [IN](#) [SZ](#)

SUBJECT: U.S.-INDIA CIVIL NUCLEAR COOPERATION: SWISS NOT
READY TO SUPPORT

REF: A. SECSTATE 42857

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 34761

[1](#)C. 2005 BERN 1315

Classified By: Poloff Eric Lundberg, Reasons 1.4 b/d

1.(C) Summary: Swiss officials remain unsure about their approach to NSG cooperation with India, but have no plans to raise public opposition. While recognizing the momentum behind the U.S.-led initiative to cooperate with the Indian civil nuclear program, the Swiss have strong misgivings about how such measures will undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Embassy continues to urge Swiss officials to look beyond the narrow technical aspects of the NPT and at the broader advantages of closer cooperation with India and enhanced non-proliferation cooperation. End Summary.

2.(C) During a March 17 meeting with the Ambassador, Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs Political Director (and Ambassador-designate to Washington) Urs Ziswiler downplayed Swiss concerns with the U.S.-India agreement and indicated that his government would not make public statements against the deal. However, he could not say how Switzerland would approach the issue of opening up Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) cooperation with India.

3.(C) In a more detailed March 15 discussion with Poloff, a more skeptical Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs disarmament chief Andreas Friedrich reiterated his views from July 2005 (Ref C) that granting India an exception to NSG requirements would weaken the international community's case against an Iranian nuclear program. The NPT had suffered several hits in recent years, including the failed Revcon last year, Friedrich complained. The Swiss did not see how exceptions to NSG guidelines could be offered to only one country.

4.(C) Poloff urged Friedrich to view cooperation with India as the better of two options. While the NPT was important, it was a tool toward the goal of non-proliferation and not an end in itself. The Swiss should recognize that bringing India's program under international scrutiny would contribute

to our mutual non-proliferation goals. India's non-proliferation record had been constructive. While it would be ideal were India to follow South Africa's example and abandon its nuclear weapons program, this was not going to happen. Bringing India closer to NSG discipline was the next best option.

5.(C) Friedrich acknowledged Poloff's points, but repeated his concerns about the validity of the NPT. He expressed concern about how other countries beyond Iran might react to a weakened NPT. Given these concerns, Switzerland would not be prepared for a decision at the March NSG meeting (which Ref A later clarified would not be sought). He said several NSG member countries were anxiously looking at the response in the U.S. Congress (implying that many would be happy to see the U.S.-India deal ended in Washington). Poloff urged Friedrich to keep an open mind.

Comment

6.(C) The technical people in the Swiss DFA, like Friedrich, are predisposed to reject closer NSG-India cooperation. At the political level, the Swiss do not want this to be a bilateral problem (either in their relations with Washington or New Delhi). Given these opposing concerns, we expect Bern to raise many questions during the upcoming NSG meeting, but eventually to go with the consensus.
Willeford